

March 25, 2024

For Immediate Release

Contact: Jenny Kakasuleff, Marketing & Communications Manager

Phone: 317.524.4100

[Jennifer.Kakasuleff@goodwillindy.org](mailto:Jennifer.Kakasuleff@goodwillindy.org)

## **Indy Resident Overcomes Disability Challenges to Achieve Independence**

*Goodwill Celebrates Indiana Disability Awareness Month*

**INDIANAPOLIS**, Ind. - Each March, *Disability Awareness Month* is celebrated throughout Indiana to increase awareness and promote independence and inclusion for all Hoosiers with disabilities. [According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics](#), individuals with disabilities are twice as likely to be unemployed as individuals without disabilities, significantly limiting their ability to live independently.

Goodwill of Central & Southern Indiana is proud to be one of the largest employers of persons with disabilities in central Indiana, providing opportunities to individuals like Peter Salathé, hired in 2017, as a part-time associate at the Goodwill retail store in College Park.

When Salathé was just a toddler, he suffered a severe stroke that left him partially paralyzed and with a series of learning disabilities.

“My physical disabilities were detrimental to me,” Salathé said. “They made it difficult for me to work, but I managed to power through because I had things that needed to get done.”

When Salathé’s father passed away in 2022, he suddenly found himself responsible for the mortgage on the family home as well as caring for his mother. He doubled his hours at work from 20 to 40 per week.

But one of his biggest challenges was learning how to drive – a necessity since he needed to get to and from work and pick up groceries and medications for his mother. Daunted but determined, Salathé utilized computer simulations and video games to help him learn how to drive and eventually earned his driver’s license.

“What helped me overcome my challenges was my attitude towards self-improvement,” Salathé said. “Despite facing one crisis after another, I’m a happy, contributing member of society, with people I care about, and that makes me proud.”

Today, he uses his story to inspire others as well as to support and encourage his peers.

“Goodwill employs nearly 5,000 Hoosiers – one-third of whom have a disability,” said Kent A. Kramer, president and CEO of Goodwill of Central & Southern Indiana. “We encourage other employers to consider the many ways that they can provide accommodations to support persons with disabilities in achieving independence.”

If you're interested in interviewing Salathe, please contact Jenny Kakasuleff, marketing and communications manager at Goodwill, at [jennifer.kakasuleff@goodwillindy.org](mailto:jennifer.kakasuleff@goodwillindy.org) or 317.345.4176.

###

### **About Goodwill of Central & Southern Indiana**

Goodwill of Central & Southern Indiana changes lives every day by empowering people to increase their independence and reach their potential through education, health and employment. The organization serves 40 Indiana counties and operates more than 70 retail locations, as well as contract manufacturing services, charter schools for adults and youth, a maternal-child health program, a child care center and more.